

# State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



## PERMANENT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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### Testimony of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee Thursday, March 3, 2005

#### **Re: HB 6751 AAC The Unemployment Compensation Alternative Base Period**

The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women thanks the committee for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding **HB 6751 AAC The Unemployment Compensation Alternative Base Period** which would extend the use of the alternative base period (ABP), for another three years, for computation of unemployment compensation benefits.

The PCSW is particularly supportive of this proposal because it has and will continue to provide needed assistance to former welfare recipients who have recently entered the labor force, as well as to the many women workers who are part of the "contingent" workforce with part-time, temporary or seasonal employment.

Under the alternative base period system, these workers are able to qualify for unemployment compensation as much as six months sooner than they would have without the ABP. This is because the ABP includes review of the applicant's wage history from the "lag" quarter (earnings in the calendar quarter at the time of filing). In effect, this change eliminates a three to six month waiting period that some workers currently face when applying for benefits, and allows these workers to receive prompt, timely payments when they lose a job through no fault of their own, at a time when they need the benefits the most. ABP only changes when a worker will be eligible for benefits; it does not change: the amount of money a worker must earn to be eligible for unemployment compensation, the amount of time a worker must work to be eligible, the amount of benefits or the length of time a worker may receive benefits.

ABP benefits a small number of claims, is not administratively burdensome, and has been working as intended. We urge this committee not only to pass this proposal, but also to eliminate the sunset provision all together and make ABP permanent.

Thank you.

